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Proceedings; and one, also, to the Suffolk Institute. I took a copy to the London Society of Antiquaries soon after my arrival here, and I gave a copy each to one or two special friends of Mr. Peabody. . . . I had a kind letter from Dr. Robbins a few days ago, and shall write to him soon. Longfellow has gone to the Isle of Wight. He and I had a pleasant visit to the Prince of Wales, last week, by invitation. The Prince spoke most cordially of the attentions paid him in Boston. The same evening, I met him again at a party at Earl Spencer's. I wish I could find a moment to see the Althorpe Library, as you did; but I am not sure we can get round in that direction. We are going to the Isle of Wight to be quiet next week.

I have seen Mr. Winter Jones and Mr. Major, since I wrote last, and spent some hours with them in the British Museum. They both spoke kindly of you, as did Mr. Almack, and desired to be remembered to you. . . . The latest news is an unpublished poem of Milton, discovered in the British Museum! Who will ever know all the treasures contained in that wonderful collection? Since the Bradford manuscript turned up at Fulham, and the Winthrop Papers at New London, nothing surprises me in the way of fossil literature. . . .

Yours sincerely, ROBERT C. WINTHROP.

SEPTEMBER MEETING.

A stated monthly meeting of the Society was held this day, Thursday, September 10th, at eleven o'clock, A.M.; Colonel ASPINWALL in the chair.

The Recording Secretary read the record of the last meeting.

The Librarian announced donations from the City of Boston; the Boston Society of Natural History; the Bunker Hill Monument Association; the Class of 1829 of Harvard College; the Cretan Committee; the

Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals; the New-England Historic-Genealogical Society; The New-England Loyal Publication Society; the Rhode-Island Historical Society; the State Historical Society of Iowa; the Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston; The Young Men's Christian Association of Worcester; the Publishers of "The Book Buyer"; Don Miguel d'Antas, Minister of Portugal to the United States; John Appleton, M.D.; Mr. Deleraine P. Corey; Mr. Elnathan F. Duren; Mr. Edward D. Harris; Benjamin D. Johnson, Esq.; Montgomery C. Meigs, Quartermaster-General, U.S.A.; Rev. George H. Vibbert; Clifford C. Waters, Esq.; Hon. John Wentworth; from two unknown donors; and from Messrs. Green, Lawrence, and Whitmore, of the Society.

A letter from the Minister of Portugal to the United States, Don Miguel d'Antas, was read, communicating to the Society, through Mr. Winthrop, the President, a copy of a work published by him, under the title, "Les Faux Don Sebastian: Étude sur l'Histoire du Portugal"; for which the thanks of the Society were ordered.

An application from Mr. Abner C. Goodell, Jr., for himself and Mr. Ellis Ames, — Commissioners appointed by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for the printing of the Provincial Statutes, — for leave to copy sundry passages from the manuscript continuation of Chalmers's "Political Annals," in the archives of the Society, was granted under the rules.

Mr. Ellis Ames exhibited some of the sheets of the Provincial Statutes, now in course of publication, and

made some interesting remarks on the subject of these Statutes, and the plan pursued by the Committee in editing the work.

On motion of Mr. R. FROTHINGHAM, it was —

Voted, That Mr. Ames be requested to write out his remarks in full, for the information of the Society.

Mr. DEANE read the following paper, which he said had been communicated to him by Mr. Frederic Kidder, of Boston, it having been copied by him from the Massachusetts State Archives, Lib. 197, p. 125: —

"*To the Honb^l^ American Congress now setting at Philadelphia.*

"MAY IT PLEASE YOUR HONORS.

"The House of representatives of the State of Massachusetts Bay beg leave to represent to your Honors, that they have now under their consideration the justice & propriety of abolishing Slavery in this State & liberating the Negroes held in servitude here. This question has at different times for many years past been a subject of debate in former Houses, without any decision on the main principle; and although they have generally appeared as individuals convinced of the rectitude of the measure, nothing further has been done than to have a Bill before them, which after some debate, from various circumstantial obstacles & embarrisments, has subsided. The last House resumed this question in consequence of a petition from a number of Africans, & ordered a Bill to be brought in, which, after one reading, was refered over to this House, & is now before us, and has been considered in a first & second reading. Convinced of the justice of the measure, we are restrained from passing it only from an apprehension that our brethren in the other Colonies should conceive there was an impropriety in our determining on a question which may in its nature & operation be of extensive influence, without previously consulting your Honors. We therefore have ordered the Bill to lay, and ask the attention of your Honors to this matter, that if consistent with the union & harmony of the United States, we may follow the dictates of our own understandings & feelings, at the same time assuring your Honors that we have such a sacred regard to the union & harmony of the United States, as to conceive ourselves under

obligations to * refrain from every measure that should have a tendency to injure that union which is the basis and foundation of our defence and happiness." †

Indexed, — "June 1777."

Endorsed, — "Letter to Congress respecting freeing y^e negroes."

Mr. Deane proceeded: —

I regard this paper, Mr. President, as interesting, inasmuch as it indicates the feeling which existed in the House of Representatives of Massachusetts, the year following the Declaration of Independence, on the subject of Slavery within her borders; while, at the same time, it shows how unwilling were the patriots there assembled, in that eminently critical period in the history of the country, to take any steps, by absolute legislation on the subject, which

* At the foot of this paper, which, near its close, has some erasures (as it appears to be the original draft of the letter), another reading, or some additional words, at this place, are suggested, as follows: "suspend what, were we unconnected, we should suppose Justice to individuals." — C. D.

† It appears by the "Journal of the House of Representatives of the State of Massachusetts Bay," that, on Monday, the 9th of June, 1777, "A Bill entitled an Act for preventing the Practice of holding Persons in Slavery," was "Read a first time, and ordered to be read again on Friday next [the 13th] at ten o'clock, A.M." (page 19). On that day, in the "afternoon," the bill was "Read a second Time, and after Debate thereon, it was moved and seconded, That the same lie upon the Table, and that Application be made to Congress on the Subject thereof; and the Question being put it was pass'd in the Affirmative, and Mr. Speaker, Mr. *Wendall*, and Col. *Orne*, were appointed a Committee to prepare a Letter to Congress accordingly, and report" (page 25). On the next day, Saturday, the 14th, "The Committee appointed to prepare a Letter to Congress on the Subject of the Bill for preventing the Practice of holding Persons in Slavery, reported." The above draft of a Letter "To the Honorable American Congress now sitting at Philadelphia," found among the archives at the State House, was the Committee's Report, which, as appears by the Journal, was "Read and Ordered to lie" (*ibid.*).

The "Bill" above referred to, entitled "An Act for preventing the practice of holding persons in Slavery," is at the State House in "Revolution Resolves," vol. vii. pp. 130–1.

The following is an extract from the Journal of Brigadier-General Jedediah Preble, representative to the General Court of Massachusetts from Falmouth (now Portland): "1777, Friday, June 13th, afternoon. The Slave bill was taken up, and, after a long debate, it was voted, that it should lie until a committee, chosen for that purpose, should write to Congress to know their minds, whether it would be agreeable to them that we should free the negroes. When the Committee reported the letter, the House rejected it, and let it lie until Monday." The printed journal says, "Read and Ordered to lie;" and the record for Monday is silent respecting it. — C. D.

might be regarded with disfavor by any of the other colonies entertaining different views, and which might "have a tendency to injure that Union which is the basis and foundation of our defence and happiness." Indeed, it is not certain that this paper even, — that is to say, the letter here addressed to the Congress at Philadelphia, — though carefully preserved among the archives of the State, was ever formally transmitted to the body for whom it was intended. It may have been thought best that some influential member should privately confer with the Massachusetts delegates in Congress, and learn their minds as to the probable effect of the intended measure, before proceeding further, as a body, to deal with a subject, already, it would seem, exciting jealousy in the national councils. Massachusetts had, with her sister-colonies thrown off her foreign allegiance; but she had joined hands with those colonies in the common cause, and was careful to do nothing to injure that cause while the great struggle was pending. Her conduct was noble and needs no defence. Let it be remembered, that slavery at this time existed in each of the thirteen colonies. It will be observed that it is stated that "this question" — that is to say, the abolition of slavery in the Colony — "has at different times, for many years past, been a subject of debate in former Houses, without any decision on the main principle; and although they have generally appeared, as individuals, convinced of the rectitude of the measure," yet various "obstacles and embarrassments" had intervened to prevent these individual opinions and wishes from being embodied in a legislative enactment. What the nature of these "obstacles and embarrassments" was, especially during the administration of the royal governors, is already well known to the student of our history.

The reading of the paper elicited considerable discussion, in which Messrs. Washburn, Paige, Parker, R. Frothingham, and E. Ames participated.

Mr. DEANE also spoke of having heard recently from the President, Mr. Winthrop, who desired to be remembered to the brethren. In consequence of the illness of Mrs. Winthrop's father and brother, his visit abroad had been somewhat abridged, and the party had taken passage for New York in the steamer which sails on the 12th instant. Mr. Winthrop said that, on landing, he should proceed directly to Canandaigua, the residence of Mrs. Winthrop's father and brother, but he expected to be in Massachusetts by the following month.

OCTOBER MEETING.

A stated monthly meeting of the Society was held this day, Thursday, October 8th, at eleven o'clock, A.M.; at which the President, the Hon. ROBERT C. WINTHROP, took the chair for the first time, after an absence of more than fifteen months in Europe.

The Recording Secretary read the record of the last meeting.

The Librarian reported donations to the Library the past month from the City of Boston; the Chicago Historical Society; the Massachusetts Medical Society; the New-England Loyal Publication Society; the Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston; the Editors of the "Advocate"; the Publishers of the "Book Buyer"; William Allen, Esq.; John Appleton, M.D.; Mr. George Arnold; William T. Brigham, Esq.; Mr. J. M. Bugbee; Rev. S. Hopkins Emery; Captain William

Wyman, Thomas B., donation from, 33.
Wyat, *Sir* Francis, 25, 26.
Wyatt, W. E., *D.D.*, his controversy with J. Sparks, 242, 243.

Y.

Yale College, 113, 407.
Yale College Library, 404.
Yarmouth, *N.S.*, inscription at, 93.
York, 489.
York, *Duke of*, 163.
Young, ——, cited, 244.
Young, Alexander, *D.D.*, 433. Sketch of, 431–432.
Young *v.* Adams, 54.
Young, Stephen J., donations from, 21, 344.

ERRATA.

Page 16, *note*, bottom line, read "iii. 309–11."
„ 18, line 7, for "illegible signature or mark" read "Mamoho."
„ 68, line 18, for "subjects-matter" read "subject-matters."
„ 108, line 13 from bottom, for "President of Bowdoin College" read "pronounced at Bowdoin College."
„ 126, *note*, line 6 from bottom, the ") " should be placed after the word "pages" instead of after the figures "45."
„ 208, line 19 from bottom should read, "But these seem to be blown over."
„ 292, line 5, for "intersets" read "interests."
„ 298, line 18, read, "the *copies* from the original autographs."
„ 326, line 8 from bottom, read "a quarter past 1 night."
„ 327, line 12 from bottom, "1637–3 " should be placed against the line above.
„ 333, *note*, 8th line from bottom, read, "an extract from the manuscript journal, &c., communicated by Frederic Kidder, Esq."
„ 444, top line, for "Ohio" read "Illinois."